



Minutes

City Council's Neighborhood Quality of Life, Public Safety, & Parks and Recreation Committee

November 14, 2006

Minutes of the City Council's Neighborhood Quality of Life, Public Safety, & Parks and Recreation Committee held on Tuesday, November 14, 2006, 3:30 p.m., at the Tempe City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Councilmember Ben Arredondo, Chair
Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian

City Staff Present:

Debbie Bair, Fire/Sr. Mgmt Assistant
Travis Dray, Deputy Mgr, Recreation
Jim Gaintner, Asst. Fire Chief
Kate Hanley, TCC
Shelley Hearn, Comm Relations Mgr
Cliff Jones, Fire Chief
Glenn Kephart, Public Wrks Mgr
Lucy Morales, Public Wrks Mgmt Asst
John Osgood, Deputy Pub Wrks Mgr
Mark Perkovich, Police Dept.
Larry Randall, Fire/Public Education Spec
Mark Richwine, Parks & Rec Mgr
Chris Salomone, Comm Dev Mgr
Marc Scott, Fire/Fire Marshall
Michael Spencer, Sr Code Inspection Spec
Julie Stennerson, Exec Asst
Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Pgm Spec
Sam Thompson, Deputy Mgr, Parks
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Svcs Dir
Mari Yennie, Council Aide

Guests Present:

Katie Nelson, AZ Republic
Joe Pospicil, resident

Councilmember Ben Arredondo called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Discussion of the Committee's Action Plan

Councilmember Arredondo stated that the Action Plan was approved by Council at the last Issue Review Session on November 2nd.

Agenda Item 2 – Neighborhood Park Renovation and Restoration Program Update

Mark Richwine summarized that staff took the information presented at the last meeting and evaluated the items on the matrix to develop a recommendation for a systematic method to proceed with the park renovation program.

- The first five parks listed are the parks previously discussed with Council as a priority based on either completion of a master plan or in the process of completing a master plan. Those parks are Hudson, Canal, Daley, Scudder and Goodwin.
- The remainder of the parks are ranked from 6 to 48.
- Staff submitted a request through the budget office to renovate four parks per year.
- Should Council agree, staff would renovate four parks per year in the order listed.

Mr. Richwine stated that staff recommends this be adopted so groups or organizations interested in having a park redeveloped in their neighborhood can know where they stand on the prioritized list instead of applying for funds through the Neighborhood Grant Program in hopes that the park will be renovated sooner.

Councilmember Arredondo asked for clarification that this does not have a factor on them applying for grants for park improvements.

Mr. Richwine responded that neighborhood associations have previously applied for grant money and upon receipt of that have proceeded with the master plan and an expectation that the planned parks would be renovated first. The first five parks have already completed master plans through the Neighborhood Grant Program. Staff hopes that as a result of the public information and a desire to move forward with a comprehensive program, there won't be a flurry of requests in hopes of accelerating a neighborhood's desire to move up on the list.

Councilmember Arredondo added that it is important to push for a clear understanding that there will be four parks done each year. He recommended that this move forward to Council.

DIRECTION:

Staff was directed to put this on the December 14th City Council Issue Review Session for direction from the full Council.

Agenda Item 3 –Discussion of High-Rise Building Fire Safety

Fire Chief Cliff Jones summarized that a number of residents have asked about the City's approach to high-rise issues as the number of high-rise buildings increases, particularly in the downtown area and around Town Lake.

Assistant Chief Marc Scott summarized a four-phase high-rise building safety plan:

- Phase 1 - Built-in fire protection in high-rise buildings through the International Building and Fire Code.
 - Full fire alarm systems in the buildings including horns, strobes and smoke detectors in all public areas.
 - Residential condo units have their own localized smoke detection system.
 - Public address systems and emergency voice communication systems are required.
 - Automatic sprinkler systems are required in all spaces, including each individually-owned unit.

- Standpipes and stairwells with Fire Department connections at each landing.
- Smoke control or pressurization for stairwells.
- Emergency generators for emergency lighting.
- Pre-identified knockout windows for firefighters.
- Fire command center for each high-rise for Fire Department use.
- Elevator recall for firefighter use.
- Fire apparatus access to the grade level of building.
- Fire planning for each building.
- Phase 2 - Fire Prevention Programs
 - High-rise safety and training documents for residents, including evacuation plans and handouts on emergency procedures.
 - Assist building managers in drafting emergency evacuation plans.
 - Form a partnership group with high-rise managers to meet quarterly to discuss issues.
 - Conduct an annual high-rise managers' academy.
 - Conduct annual fire drills.
- Phase 3 - Building Maintenance and Inspections for Life
 - Annual inspections at each high-rise.
- Phase 4 - Training and Drilling with Firefighters

There was discussion about the definition of a high-rise, City equipment to service that height, the number of businesses inspected by Fire Prevention, and the possibility of adding additional staff with a goal to inspect all businesses annually. Councilmember Arredondo asked staff to determine the numbers required to accomplish this so that the Council has the information at budget time.

Councilmember Shekerjian commended the Fire Department for their proactive program. She suggested adding information in the monthly water bill insert to let the public know that we are not just constructing tall buildings, but that there is a lot of proactive thought that goes into each design to protect people.

Assistant Fire Chief Jim Gaintner summarized that the Fire Department has had a high-rise operation in place for a number of years.

- Staff is in the process of reviewing and updating the operation to make sure we are prepared.
- Most firefighting in a high-rise takes place in the interior. Access is gained through the stairwells and all equipment is taken up the stairs.
- Many times the fire will extend to multiple floors and a simultaneous attack on all those floors cannot be handled. Sprinkler systems are intended to prevent that from happening and usually they are very successful at that.
- Evacuation is very time-consuming and laborious, and they usually have to go down stairwells as the firefighters are going up. If there are victims, the task is taken to another level.
- Fires in high-rise buildings can require three to four times the manpower than it would require at a comparable event at ground level.
- Fires behave differently in high-rises.

Councilmember Arredondo asked staff to make this same presentation at the December 14th Council IRS, and to add information regarding the Intergovernmental Agreement that allows other jurisdictions to assist fighting fires in Tempe.

Citizen Joe Pospicil suggested that the Fire Department join the Police on the Street Beat program once a quarter and provide some of these facts. It's a highly watched program.

DIRECTION:

Staff was directed to make this same presentation at the December 14th IRS. Staff was also directed to determine staff requirements for conducting annual inspections of all businesses.

Agenda Item 4 – Overview of Alley Programs

John Osgood, Deputy Public Works Manager, introduced Lucy Morales, Senior Management Assistant, who has helped in the alley and streets program. He narrated a PowerPoint providing an overview of the City's alley programs.

- A typical alley in Tempe is a dedicated public right-of-way or utility easement.
- It is area used by residents to collect trash and bulky items, both on a weekly and monthly basis.
- Alleys are sometimes used to access parking for residential, multi-family or commercial purposes and in those cases they are paved, with 15-18 miles of paved alleys.
- In some cases they are pedestrian access.
- The vast majority of alleys, about 165 miles, are unpaved. Current annual goal calls for reconstruction of approximately 6 miles of unpaved alleys. That involves about four fulltime people, front loader, grader, water and dump trucks, roller, and tamper.
- Staff tries to rejuvenate about 10 miles of alleys per year. They use a product that is non-petroleum which has a binder effect and pulls the soil together. Some light maintenance is done, but the application cycle lasts twice as long.
- Solid waste code enforcement deals with everything from illegal dumping, putting items out too early, and proper placement of uncollectible material.
- Property owners are responsible for maintenance of weeds and proper usage of containers.
- A Solid Waste Inspector was approved in the last budget, and that person will be in the alleys to talk with residents about the Code and handle education and enforcement.
- When a resident puts out too much uncontained trash and the City can't remove it, they are given ample opportunity to remove it themselves. When they won't remove it, staff removes it and the charge is added to their water bill.
- There is a potential to return to neighborhood cleanups sponsored by neighborhood associations.
- An eyes-and-ears program with the Police Department and the neighborhoods has been discussed. This would let staff know about improper dumping, etc.
- Over the next year, staff will focus on education, inspection and enforcement and let residents know about their responsibilities. With partnership, we can move through the program quicker.

Councilmember Arredondo suggested that staff consider the following:

- Determine whether uncontained trash could be picked up every three weeks rather than four weeks and return with the numbers.
- Develop an alley education program. Residents are responsible for half of the alley and are responsible for weed control and overgrowth. He suggested putting a sticker on the containers to remind the residents that they are responsible for half of the alley and list their responsibilities. Return with a program outline.
- To rejuvenate 16 miles of alleys annually, it will take too many years to cover the entire City. Return with what it would take to get it up to 25% and 50% of alleys renovated per year.
- Police motorcycles (SEMS) will be driving down the alleys so residents will know they are covered both in the front and back of their houses. On a quarterly basis, let residents know how many miles have been covered in the alleys.

Glenn Kephart added that staff could do a one-time hit on the alleys which would take about four years, and then one crew could handle the maintenance program.

Citizen Joe Pospicil suggested that a chipper/grinder might work with the bulk collections.

Councilmember Arredondo asked staff to work with these suggestions. He asked Mark Perkovich to work with staff to log the SEMS work in the alleys on a quarterly basis. Cleaning and rejuvenation of the alleys, uncontained trash, and the educational program were discussed and by February, staff should be able to come back with the numbers. He would like to get this to Council before March.

Fire Chief Jones added that the work Public Works does in the alley maintenance program pays huge dividends in minimizing the potential for nuisance fires. Nuisance fires are minimal and it's due to the job they do.

DIRECTION:

Staff was directed to return to the Committee in February with an education program update, the cost for increasing uncontained collection from four weeks to three weeks and the cost for increasing alley rejuvenation by 25% and 50% annually.

Agenda Item 5 – Future Agenda Items

- Code Enforcement update on trailer parks
- Presentation on the bike path created in South Tempe

No meeting in December. Next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2007.


Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Prepared by: Julie Stennerson

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& Parks and Recreation Council Committee
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Reviewed by: Connie Krosschell

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Connie Krosschell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Connie Krosschell
Acting City Clerk